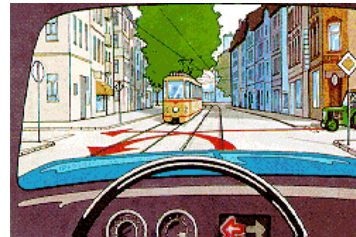




Uniquely German Traffic rules



Driving in Germany has unique challenges that cannot be found in the states. Not knowing the particular variations in the law can be dangerous and costly (\$). Read further for some of the lesser-known rules.

- **EMERGENCY VEHICLES:** Emergency vehicles have special Right-Of-Way privileges. Drivers must pull over to the right and stop when these emergency vehicles approach. Whenever you are in a traffic jam (STAU), pull over to the extreme right or left side, depending on the lane occupied, to permit passage of the emergency vehicles through the center of the congestion.
- **RIGHT ON RED:** You cannot turn right on red unless there is a green arrow (sign, not light) attached to the traffic light. If there is one, yield to pedestrians and oncoming traffic, use caution and turn.
- **AUTOBAHN RULES:** Passing in the right lane and reversing on the autobahn are illegal. If you miss an exit, continue on to the next one. If you get caught at the end of a STAU, you should turn on the 4-way emergency flashers to warn approaching traffic.
- **MERGING TRAFFIC:** Zipper Method - If a vehicle is entering the roadway from the right and has its left turn signal blinking, you are required to allow them to merge.
- **3-LANE ROADS AND TUNNELS:** 3-lane roads and tunnels will have a center "directional" lane. This lane is designed to aid the flow of traffic during peak traffic periods. As you approach the road or tunnel and you see a signal light with a green arrow pointing down, this means that the "directional" lane is open to traffic traveling in your direction. A Red X means the lane is open to opposing traffic.
- **STREET CAR STOPS:** Unless there is a designated streetcar lane, streetcar tracks normally will be on the left lanes (inner lanes) of a 4-lane road. Street Cars are treated no different than regular traffic and following streetcars is legal. If you are in front of a streetcar, there is no special requirement to get out of his way. At Streetcar Stops, passing is prohibited, even if there is an open lane to the right.
- **CITY TRANSIT / SCHOOL BUS STOPS:** Whenever a city transit or school bus is stopped at a marked bus stop and has 4-way emergency flashers on, it is illegal to pass the bus at speeds greater than 7 kilometers per hour (walking speed), regardless of how many lanes of traffic the street has.
- **SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL:** The driver's vision must be free of all obstruction, to include clean windows at all times. Vehicle operators must clear all windows (not just front and rear) of snow and ice before putting the vehicle into motion. The law also requires that the roof, hood, trunk, and other vehicle surfaces be free of snow that could fly off of and onto another vehicle and impede that driver's vision. Vehicle operators can be fined up to 2,500 Euro for violating this law.
- **FIRST AID KIT / TRAFFIC WARNING TRIANGLE:** A Germany-approved First Aid Kit and Traffic Warning Triangle are required to be in a vehicle at all times. First Aid Kits cannot be older than five years. Anyone caught by the German police with an outdated First Aid Kit will be fined 15 Euro.
- **CELL PHONE:** It is against the law to use a cell phone while driving. Drivers who do not have a "hands-free" phone system are required to pull over, stop and turn off the engine when using a cell phone.
- **PETS:** Pets must remain in a pet cage at all times when the vehicle is in motion.
- **CHILD RESTRAINT DEVICES:** German law states that children 11 years of age or younger, or shorter than 150 centimeters (4 feet, 11 inches), are required to use suitable child-restraint devices.
- **VEHICLE ACCIDENTS:** In the event of an accident, stay until the police arrive. Never leave the scene. The following steps should be completed: (1) Render necessary aid and assistance to anyone injured (Good Samaritan Law) (2) Warn other motorists by putting up a warning triangle at least 100 meters (330 ft) behind the scene of the accident (3) Call "110" for police and/or ambulance.
- **CONVERTING KILOMETERS TO MILES PER HOUR:** Example: $30 \text{ KPH} \times 6 = 180 = 18 \text{ MPH}$
- **50 / 50 LAW:** German law limits all speed limits to 50KPH whenever visibility is less than 50 meters.

"Safe Driving Tips from the 233rd BSB Safety Office"

YOUR COMMUNITY CONNECTION TO SAFETY



233rd BSB Safety Gram